

too, but they do not understand the people like the old men, and the young man must wait till the old men die to get those churches. We are not going to turn our old men out. We are not going to turn our old preachers out to give your young boys parishes and a chance. We are going to hold them. The old men are not able to stand out against all the criticism.

Now, let us look at the Sunday-school. Take the town where I live. My boy can only go to a colored Sunday-school. Take the public schools. My boy is to go to a colored high school, because it is forbidden for him to go to a white school. The principal of the high school in my town is a fourth-class dancing master. He has a dancing school at night. The white board gets him, and that is the only chance my boy has. We do want things better than this. But how shall it be done? I have waited for a long time, but I am now preparing to do something.

The white Baptist Church, Southern Methodist, have been kind enough to consider several propositions I have brought. Our convention has protested. Our national convention met, and nobody was sent but poor men. You all are giving the Negro his fill of your International organizations. I organized a Sunday-school congress and for three years we followed it up. The gentlemen who attended said they had some interest in it.

Save the Young People to the Church

I am preparing to go before the southern Baptists and ask them to take that proposition and teach the young people and save them to the church, because after they are educated an older preacher does not interest them, and they ought to have what your boys and girls want, a good man to get them into the church. They laugh at the education of the old men. To save this young man we have to look after the Sunday-school. We are now engaged in the work, and these are the real conditions as we find them.

One last word about our schools. I believe that each of these religious denominations would welcome the day when your teachers will come. I have wanted to have a teacher put into our school for ten or fifteen days at a time and have him lecture. If you can get your student to come into step, and interest him, if he could take hold of the Sunday-school with some kind of method, it would elevate the Negro as in no other way. You would reach him from one end of this country to the other.

Our statistics claim that there are 2,500,000 pupils. These only give us 18,000 organized Sunday-schools. I don't think I

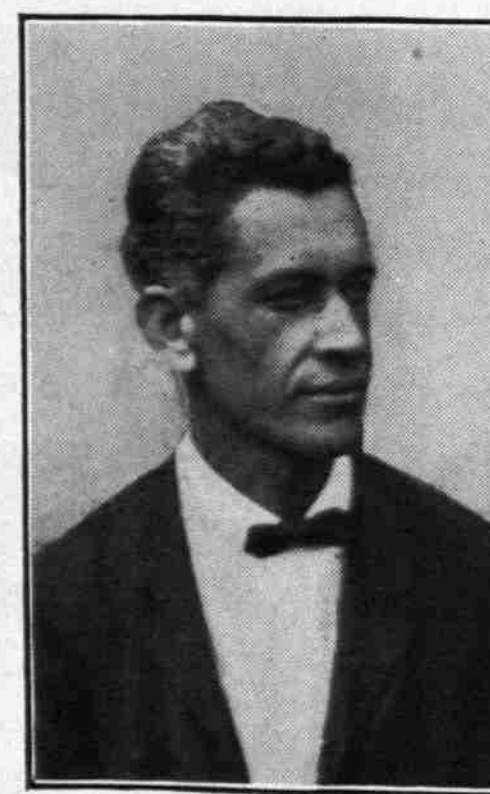
supply any white people with literature. I have by mistake sent them some, but they always send it right back to me. I don't say we supply 18,000 Sunday-schools. But last quarter, by actual count, I filled 22,560 orders for quarterlies, beginning July. I had already supplied more than 21,000 when I left home. But sometimes a Sunday-school sends in two orders, so I know that it is more than 18,000 Sunday-schools, for I send more than that every quarter. I know the publishing society publishes some, and Dr. Frost some, and David C. Cook some, and everybody else publishes some, so I don't think anybody knows how many Sunday-schools there are. There are 19,000 Negro Baptist churches.

The Present Condition of the Negro

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Former State Secretary, Arkansas (Colored) Sunday-School Association. At Clifton Conference, August 19, 1908

THE census of 1900 showed that seventy-seven per cent of the entire Negro population live in the country districts, leaving a little more than twenty-two per cent living in the villages and cities. A majority of the Negroes belong either to the Baptist church or the Methodist church. I think that is true. So



Prof. R. C. Childress

much for these denominations. And it is true that these denominations control well nigh all the Negroes. The point I was getting at is that in a large measure possibly more of these people are good denominationalists than they are Christians.

Now, the people who live in the country depend very largely upon farming for an occupation. The most of them live in the cotton plantations and raise cotton, which practically consumes all of their time. It has been said that the Negro vacation is from the first of January to the first of March. Beginning with the first of March he is busy with his cotton crop. He is not given a great deal of time for pleasure. He is at work most of the time.